



Association of Universities
and Colleges of Canada

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STATEMENT ON CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES AND THEIR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

INTRODUCTION

Education and research are international in scope in all disciplines. Universities throughout the world form an international network in which Canadian universities play an active part. Canada has gained greatly from sending many of its students and faculty abroad where they have expanded their horizons and research experience. In fact, the graduate programs of universities abroad were for many years the major source of graduate education for Canadians in a substantial number of disciplines. In recent years, a large number of international students have come to Canadian universities and have helped to provide wider perspectives to members of these institutions. Canada has been wise to welcome students from abroad and to stress the desirability of the international movement of faculty and students. The AUCC is concerned, however, that high differential tuition fees for international students restrict the attendance at Canadian universities of qualified students from abroad.

The international image of Canada and of its universities has been greatly enhanced through the involvement of our universities in international matters. The expertise of Canadian professors has been strengthened by research and study leaves abroad. These faculty members have worked with others who have different backgrounds, interests and research facilities, and have participated in the meetings of international scientific and scholarly societies. At the institutional level, Canadian universities are actively involved in many international bodies such as the Association of Commonwealth Universities, the Association des universités partiellement ou entièrement de langue française, the International Association of Universities, the International Federation of Catholic Universities and the Inter-American Organization for Higher Education.

Canada increasingly recognizes its moral and social responsibility to aid in the development of Third World countries. With the support of CIDA and other bodies, Canadian universities have increased not only their linkages with Third World educational institutions but, more dramatically, their capacity to contribute to human resource development and projects that are central to Third World development. A wise policy of IDRC provides special support to Third World researchers, often in the form of joint projects involving Canadian university researchers.

Principles

The AUCC believes:

1. that Canadian universities and university personnel gain from participation in a broad range of international organizations and conferences and by scholarly communication with their colleagues in other countries;
2. that Canadian universities should welcome visiting and exchange professors and lecturers from abroad in order to bring to Canadian staff and students the opportunity to become more aware of the culture, ideas and developments of other countries;
3. that the lack of flexibility in the appointment of foreign faculty members has diminished the learning and research environment for Canadian colleagues and students. While supporting the general principle of seeking out qualified Canadians first, the AUCC advocates a flexible and consistently applied policy for the appointment of foreign academics;
4. that international academic exchanges and participation in international conferences are too important to Canadian research and learning and to the nation to be used as a means of implementing national foreign relations policies;
5. that Canada should play a leading role in promoting the international mobility of students, professors and researchers. To this end, the AUCC encourages governments in Canada to adopt measures to facilitate such mobility;
6. that the exchange of scholarship holders provides a valuable contribution to the improvement of educational and cultural understanding. The AUCC, therefore, encourages federal and provincial governments to expand exchange scholarships in order to enrich the experience of Canadians and the understanding in other countries of Canadian institutions and values;
7. that CIDA should give higher priority to Third World development through linkages between Canadian universities and those in developing countries as well as by choosing Canadian universities as executing agents for development projects;
8. that the policies of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) in encouraging and supporting research in the Third World, including joint projects involving Third World and Canadian researchers, should continue to receive high priority;

9. that Canadian universities should explore sources of funding, such as the World Bank and the private sector, to broaden and deepen their involvement in Third World development.